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Application No. : 09/738,988
Filed : 12/19/2000
Inventor(s) : Stefania Castellani et al.
Docket No. : A0607-US-NP
Confirmation No. : 2712
Examiner : Johnna Stimpak
Art Unit : 3623
Title : METHOD FOR MIXED HUMAN AND COMPUTER-
SUPPORTED DISTRIBUTED SCHEDULING
Customer No. : 25453

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SUMMARY OF EXAMINER INTERVIEW UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.133(b)

Sir:

On May 13, 2005, Examiner Stimpak and the Undersigned agreed in a telephonic interview to examiner's amendments to be made to independent claims 1, 11, and 20 as set forth in the Appendix attached hereto. The amendments are introduced for the purpose of clarifying the claimed invention and not in view of any cited art.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 13, 2005

Application No. 09/738,988

APPENDIX

Listing of Claims 1, 11, and 20 Discussed In the Examiner Interview:

1. **(Agreed Amendments)** A method for mixed human and computer-supported distributed scheduling of a task according to scheduling decisions within a plurality of workplaces, said workplaces being connected to each other and to a shared negotiation facility via a computer network, the method comprising:

electronically recording a first scheduling decision manually expressed on a first scheduling board within a first of said workspaces and creating first scheduling decision data which represent the first scheduling decision in a computer-readable form;

electronically recording a second scheduling decision manually expressed on a second scheduling board within a second of said workspaces and creating second scheduling decision data which represent the second scheduling decision in a computer-readable form;

recognizing requests for task outsourcing manually expressed on the scheduling boards of said workspaces using a first shape and requests for task in-sourcing manually expressed on the scheduling boards of said workspaces using a second shape distinct from the first shape;

transferring the first scheduling decision data and the second scheduling decision data via the computer network to the shared negotiation facility;

negotiating said task within the shared negotiation facility by combining the first scheduling decision data with the second scheduling decision data received from at least said first of said workplaces and said second of said workplaces and creating negotiation result data which represent results of negotiating said task; and

transferring said negotiation result data to at least said first and said second of said workspaces for indicating scheduling information specifying at least one of:

(i) in-sourcing said task to said first of said workspaces when the second scheduling decision indicates, using the first shape, a request for task outsourcing and the first scheduling decision indicates, using the second shape, a free time slot for task in-sourcing that satisfies start time and completion time of the second scheduling decision; and

Application No. 09/738,988

(ii) outsourcing said task from said first of said workspaces when the first scheduling decision indicates, using the first shape, a request for task outsourcing and the second scheduling decision indicates, using the second shape, a free time slot for task-insourcing that satisfies start and completion time of the first scheduling decision.

11. (Agreed Amendments) An apparatus for mixed human and computer supported distributed scheduling of tasks within a plurality of workplaces, comprising:

a first scheduling board located in a first of said workplaces and a second scheduling board located in a second of said workplaces;

recording devices located in at least the first and the second workplaces for electronically recording [[said scheduling decision]] scheduling decisions and creating scheduling decision data which represent the scheduling decisions in a computer-readable form;

a shared negotiation facility for negotiating a scheduling task according to the scheduling decisions among said plurality of workplaces;

a computer network connecting said workplaces to each other and to the shared negotiation facility for transferring said scheduling decision data to said shared negotiation facility;

wherein said first and said second workplaces, said shared negotiation facility, and said computer network operating together to:

electronically record a first scheduling decision manually expressed on the first scheduling board and create first scheduling decision data which represent the first scheduling decision in a computer-readable form;

electronically record a second scheduling decision manually expressed on the second scheduling board and create second scheduling decision data which represent the second scheduling decision in a computer-readable form;

recognize requests for task outsourcing manually expressed on the scheduling boards of said workspaces using a first shape and requests for task insourcing manually expressed on the scheduling boards of said workspaces using a second shape distinct from the first shape;

Application No. 09/738,988

transfer the first scheduling decision data and the second scheduling decision data via the computer network to the shared negotiation facility;

negotiate said scheduling task within the shared negotiation facility by combining the first scheduling decision data with the second scheduling decision data received from at least said first of said workplaces and said second of said workplaces and create negotiation result data which represent results of negotiating said scheduling task; and

transfer said negotiation result data to at least said first and said second of said workspaces for indicating scheduling information specifying one of:

(i) in-sourcing said scheduling task to said first of said workspaces when the second scheduling decision indicates, with the first shape, a request for task outsourcing and the first scheduling decision indicates, with the second shape, a free time slot for task in-sourcing that satisfies start time and completion time of the second scheduling decision; and

(ii) outsourcing said scheduling task from said first of said workspaces when the first scheduling decision indicates, with the first shape, a request for task outsourcing and the second scheduling decision indicates, with the second shape, a free time slot for task in-sourcing that satisfies start and completion time of the first scheduling decision.

20. (Agreed Amendments) A method for mixed human and computer-supported distributed scheduling of a task according to scheduling decisions within a plurality of workplaces, said workplaces being connected to each other and to a shared negotiation facility via a computer network, the method comprising:

electronically recording a first scheduling decision and a second scheduling decision with at least one time slot with a control mark and at least one time slot without a control mark manually expressed on a first scheduling board within a first of said workspaces and a second scheduling board within a second of said workspaces, respectively;

recognizing requests for task outsourcing manually expressed on the scheduling boards of said workspaces using a first shape and requests for task in-sourcing manually expressed on the scheduling boards of said workspaces using a

Application No. 09/738,988

second shape distinct from the first shape;

creating first scheduling decision data and second scheduling decision data which represent the first scheduling decision and the second scheduling decision data, respectively, in a computer-readable form;

searching in the first scheduling decision data and the second scheduling decision data for time slots with control marks;

transferring in-source and outsource time slots with control marks in the first scheduling decision data and the second scheduling decision data via the computer network to the shared negotiation facility;

negotiating said task within the shared negotiation facility by combining the first scheduling decision data with the second scheduling decision data received from at least said first of said workplaces and said second of said workplaces and creating negotiation result data which represent results of negotiating said task; and

transferring said negotiation result data to at least said first and said second of said workspaces for indicating scheduling information specifying one of:

(i) in-sourcing said task to said first of said workspaces when the second scheduling decision indicates said task with a control mark specifying, with the first shape, a request for task outsourcing, and the first scheduling decision indicates a free time slot with a control mark specifying, with the second shape, a request for task in-sourcing that satisfies start time and completion time of the second scheduling decision; and

(ii) outsourcing said task from said first of said workspaces when the first scheduling decision indicates said task with a control mark specifying, with the first shape, a request for task outsourcing, and the second scheduling decision indicates a free time slot with a control mark specifying, with the second shape, a request for task in-sourcing that satisfies start time and completion time of the first scheduling decision.